

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8862

S E C R E T ATHENS 3844

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E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: PFOR, AFSP, GR, US

SUBJECT: DTS RELAY STATION AT TATOI

REF: STATE 109638

1. DURING A LONG PRIVATE MEETING I HAD WITH FOREIGN MINISTER BITSIOS THIS MORNING, I REVIEWED WITH HIM IN SOME DETAIL THE IMPORTANCE WHICH WE ATTACH TO THE DTS RELAY STATION AT TATOI. I MADE THE POINTS CONTAINED IN PARA 2 REFTEL AND STRESSED OUR STRONG DESIRE TO REMAIN AT TATOI UNDER SOME KIND OF DIPLOMATIC ARRANGEMENT FOR AN INDEFINITE PERIOD AND SAID THAT WE WOULD BE WILLING TO PURCHASE THE PROPERTY OR COMPENSATE THE GOG THROUGH LEASING OR OTHER MEANS IN ORDER TO DO SO. I DID NOT RPT NOT TELL BITSIOS AT THIS MEETING THAT IF THE GOG REFUSED TO ALLOW US TO REMAIN AT TATOI THAT WE WOULD GIVE THEM OUR DECISION EARLY NEXT MONTH ON POSSIBLE RE-LOCATION OF THE FACILITIES, SINCE I WANTED TO KEEP THE PRESSURE ON TO GET THEM TO RECONSIDER AND, IF POSSIBLE, REVERSE THEIR EARLY DECISION.

2. BITSIOS TOOK CAREFUL NOTES ON MY PRESENTATION AND OUR DISCUSSION. HE LAUGHED SPONTANEOUSLY WHEN I MENTIONED OUR READINESS TO "PURCHASE THE PROPERTY." HE SAID THAT THE GREEK GOVERNMENT WAS NOT INTERESTED IN SELLING LAND IN GREECE AND THAT PM CARAMANLIS HAD MADE A FIRM DECISION EARLIER THAT THE DTS RELAY STATION AT TATOI WOULD HAVE TO

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BE TERMINATED. NOT WANTING TO CAUSE THE USG UNDUE

DIFFICULTIES, BITSIOS SAID, CARAMANLIS HAD AGREED THAT THE FACILITIES COULD BE RELOCATED TO NEA MAKRI.

3. DURING THE COURSE OF A FAIRLY LENGTHY DISCUSSION ON THIS SUBJECT BITSIOS WAS AT FIRST QUITE ADAMANT THAT THE DECISION COULD NOT BE REOPENED. HOWEVER, IN THE CONTEXT OF OTHER SUBJECTS WE WERE DISCUSSING HE FINALLY AGREED TO REOPEN THE MATTER WITH CARAMANLIS. HE SAID HE WOULD EXPLAIN TO CARAMANLIS HOW THE TATOI OPERATION HAD CHANGED AND THAT IT WAS NOW AN IMPORTANT RELAY FACILITY FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE SERVING OUR MIDDLE EASTERN AND NORTH AFRICAN DIPLOMATIC POSTS. HE SAID HE WOULD TRY TO OBTAIN CARAMANLIS' AGREEMENT THAT THE FACILITY COULD REMAIN IN TATOI FOR SOME ADDITIONAL PERIOD OF TIME, BUT HE ADDED THAT, IF CARAMANLIS AGREED, HE EXPECTED THE PM WOULD INSIST ON IDENTIFYING ANOTHER SUBSTITUTE MAJOR US FACILITY IN GREECE FOR TERMINATION. I EXPRESSED CHAGRIN AND SAID THAT THIS WAS NOT AT ALL THE WAY TO MOVE FORWARD IN THE NEW SPIRIT OF COOPERATION BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS THAT ALL OF US WERE TRYING TO FOLLOW. BITSIOS-WHO WAS IN GOOD HUMOR-SAID ALL RIGHT, THAT HE WOULD DO THE BEST HE COULD AND BE IN TOUCH WITH ME AGAIN AFTER HIS RETURN TO ATHENS. (HE AND CARAMANLIS LEAVE MAY 26 FOR BUCHAREST AND THEN THE NATO SUMMIT IN BRUSSELS AND I DO NOT EXPECT TO HEAR FROM HIM AGAIN BEFORE THE FIRST WEEK IN JUNE).

KUBISCH

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